Howard Barrons
Clean Rivers Program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
April 10th, 2018

Clean Rivers Program Overview

- The Texas Legislature passed the Texas Clean Rivers Act in 1991 after the growing concerns that water resource issues were not being pursued in an integrated, systematic manner.
- Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) was established to provide a framework for managing water quality issues in a holistic manner.

"The strategic and comprehensive monitoring and periodic assessment of water quality in each…river basin…to identify significant issues affecting water quality."

"Each basin steering committee shall develop water quality objectives and priorities."

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Clean Rivers Program Overview

- A partnership between the TCEQ, regional water authorities, and the public
- A hub for water quality information and coordination of monitoring efforts and within each river basin
- State fee-funded program (wastewater and water rights permit holders).
- A way for stakeholders and partners to get involved in water quality issues locally and at the state level

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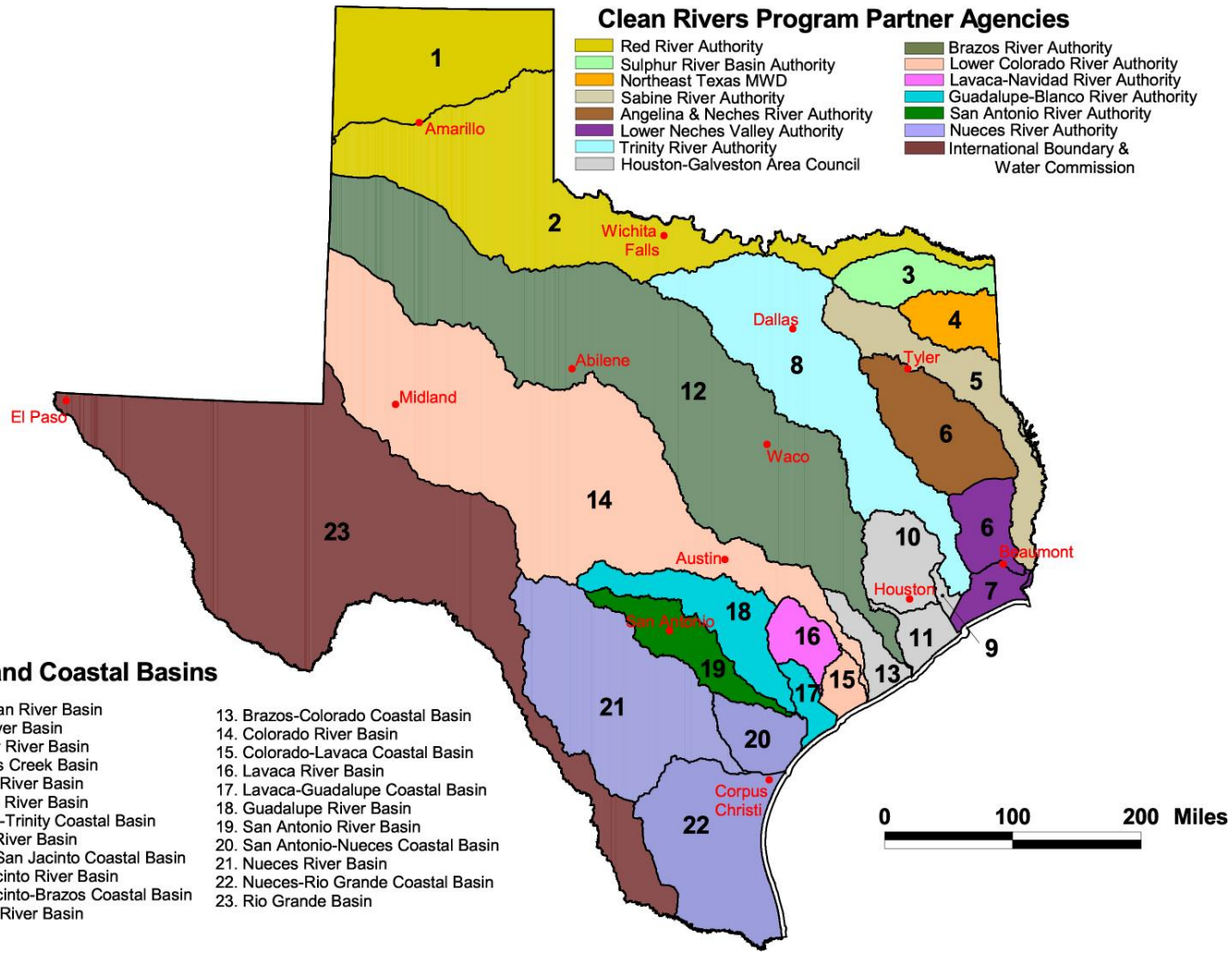
Texas River Basins



River and Coastal Basins

1. Canadian River Basin
2. Red River Basin
3. Sulphur River Basin
4. Cypress Creek Basin
5. Sabine River Basin
6. Neches River Basin
7. Neches-Trinity Coastal Basin
8. Trinity River Basin
9. Trinity-San Jacinto Coastal Basin
10. San Jacinto River Basin
11. San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin
12. Brazos River Basin
13. Brazos-Colorado Coastal Basin
14. Colorado River Basin
15. Colorado-Lavaca Coastal Basin
16. Lavaca River Basin
17. Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal Basin
18. Guadalupe River Basin
19. San Antonio River Basin
20. San Antonio-Nueces Coastal Basin
21. Nueces River Basin
22. Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal Basin
23. Rio Grande Basin

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CRP Long Term Plan

- Objective 1: Provide QA Data to Commission for Use in Water Quality Decision-Making
- Objective 2: Identify and Evaluate Water Quality Issues
- Objective 3: Promote Cooperative Watershed Planning
- Objective 4: Inform and Engage Stakeholders
- Objective 5: Maintain Efficient Use of Public Funds
- Objective 6: Adapt Program to Emerging Water Quality Issues

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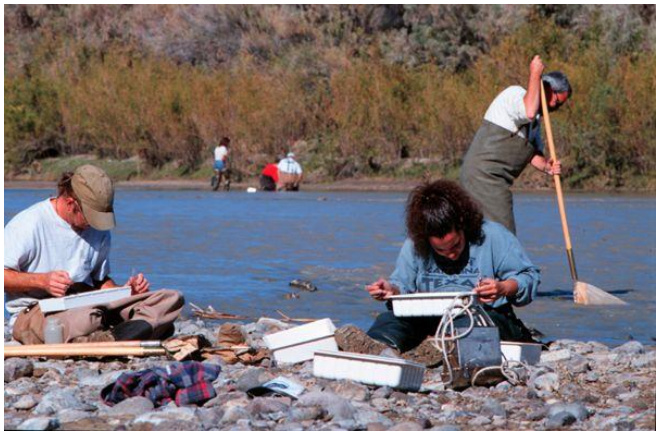
Objective 1: Quality-Assured Data

- Maintain basin-wide routine monitoring
  - Permit-support and Special Studies
- Implement water-quality monitoring under TCEQ-approved QAPP
- SWQM Procedures
- Enhance expertise by participating in trainings
  - SWQM Workshop
- Maintain water quality database - SWQMIS



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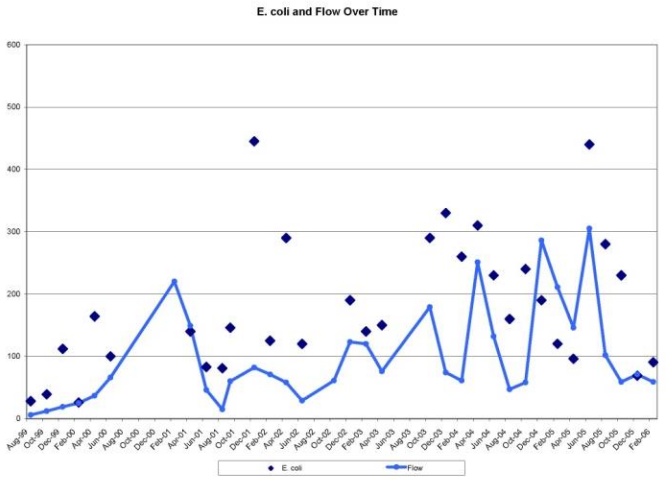
Water Quality Constituents

- Field – diss. oxygen, pH, specific conductance, temperature, transparency, salinity, flow
- Conventional – Nutrients, Total Suspended Solids, Total Dissolved Solids, Chloride, Sulfate, chlorophyll *a*
- Bacteria – *E. coli*, *Enterococcus*
- Metals in water / sediment
- Organics in water / sediment
- Biological assemblages (nekton/benthics)

Routine Monitoring



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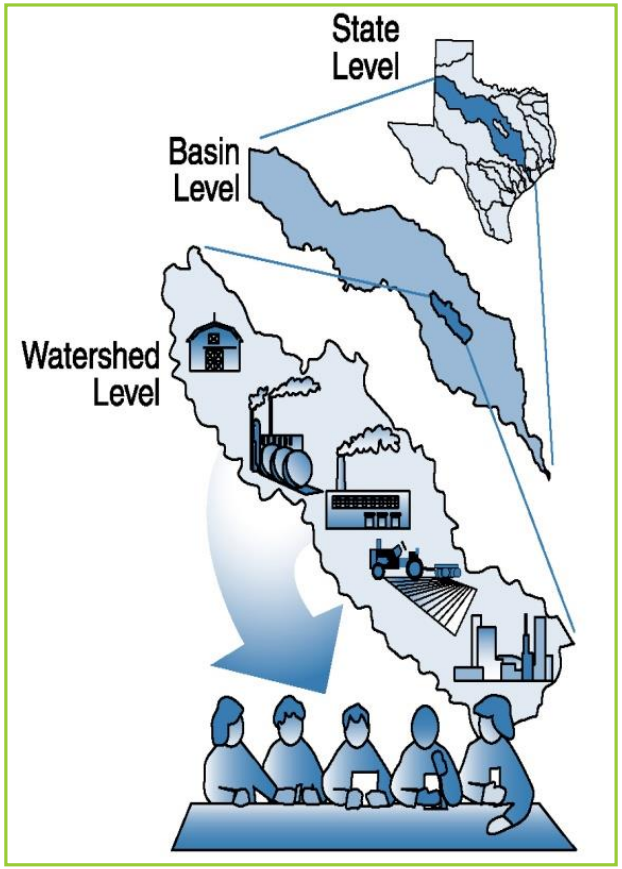
Objective 2: Identify and Evaluate Water Quality Issues



- Watershed management approach
- Establish priorities for corrective action
- Implementation
- Adapt to changes and priorities

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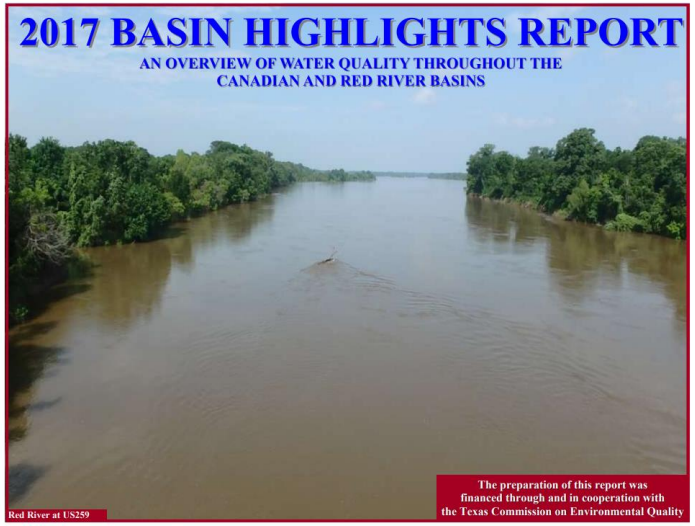
CRP Reports

- Basin Highlights Report
  - Annually*
    - Standard Report
    - Watershed Characterization
    - Program Update



- Basin Summary Report
  - Comprehensive Review of water quality in the basin
  - Previously done every 5 years, but new rulemaking will create a 6 year schedule more in line with the biennial cycle of CRP

- Special Reports
  - Special Studies
  - As needed

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Objective 3: Promote Cooperative Watershed Planning

- Coordinate monitoring activities by basin
  - Cooperation among federal, state, regional and local planning agencies, and the public
  - Maintain and update the web-based monitoring schedule
- Address sampling priorities of the TCEQ and stakeholders
- Recommend water quality management strategies for correcting priority water quality problems and pollution sources

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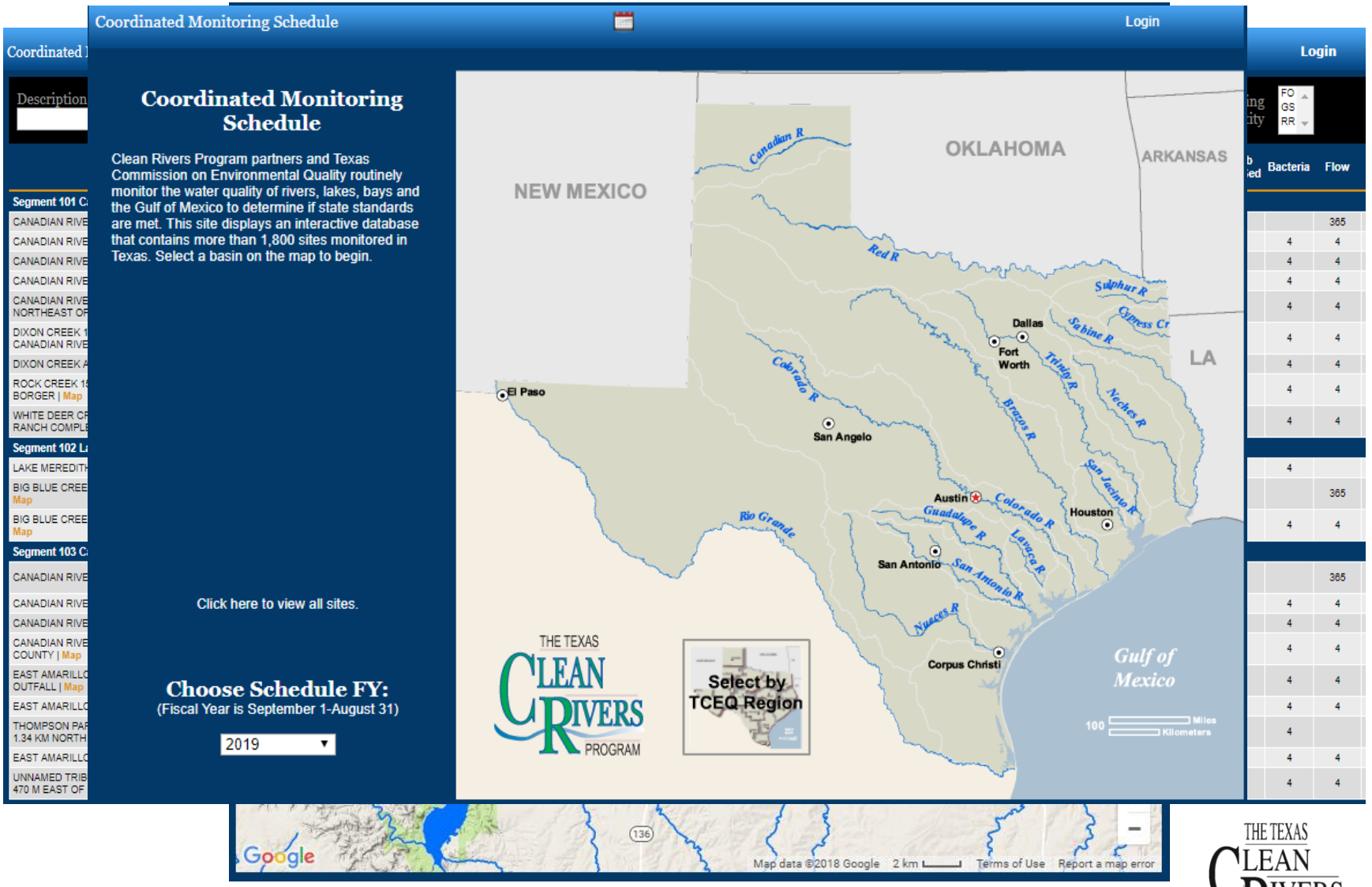
Coordinated Monitoring



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Objective 4: Inform and Engage Stakeholders

- Annual basin steering committee meetings
- Setting water quality priorities
- Bringing issues to the table
- Work to resolve water quality issues
- Provide information requested by stakeholders

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Public Outreach

- Volunteer monitoring programs
  - Texas Stream Team
- Education and Outreach
  - Presentations at local schools, meetings, conferences
  - Email groups
- Texas Watershed Stewards
  - Partnership with TAMU AgriLife
- News releases
- Workshops

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Objective 5: Maintain Efficient Use of Public Funds

- Fees are assessed to wastewater and water rights permits
- Baseline biennial budget of $9,000,000
  - $500,000 – TCEQ Administration
  - $8,500,000 – Available for Partners
- Have been successful in the past at finding additional funds for partners
  - $400,000 of Clean Water Act Section 106 funds in FY1617
  - Equipment Purchase and Loan Program

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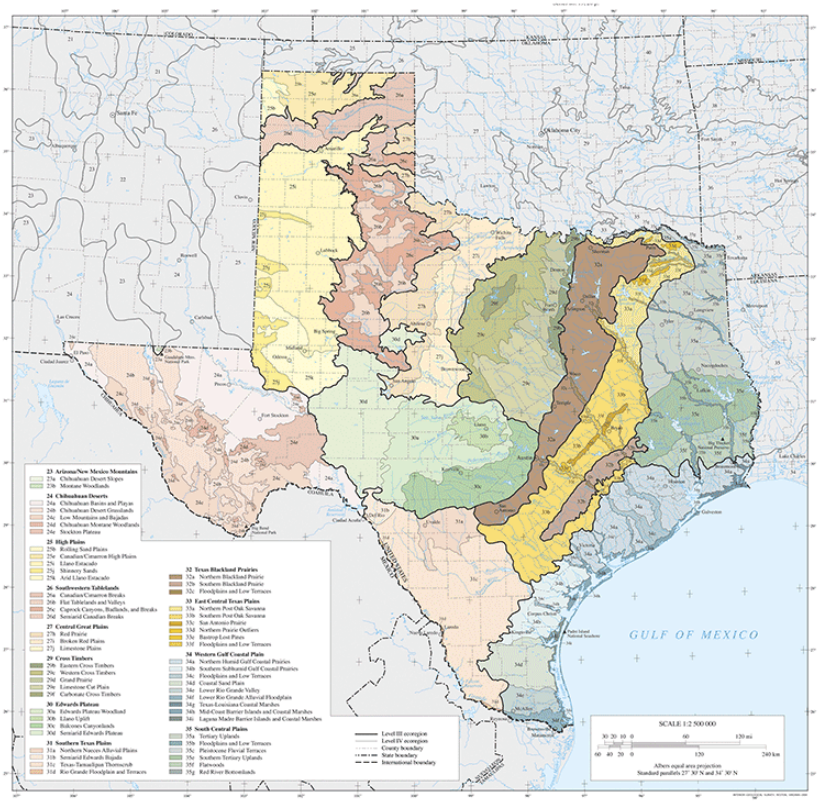
Objective 6: Adapt Program to Emerging Water Quality Issues

- Watershed committees with interested parties develop action items and recommend changes to CRP
- Annually revisit action items and track progress toward accomplishing goals
- Incorporate changes and updates into the CRP Guidance



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CRP Success

- CRP Partners generates approximately 60% of data used for TCEQ water quality assessments.
- The program has increased water quality sampling coverage throughout the river basins of Texas.
- CRP partnership allows the program to be successful and produce informative and reliable water quality data.
- CRP has encouraged public outreach and awareness of water quality issues by bringing diverse stakeholders together.

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Texas Surface Water Quality Standards (TSWQS)

- Establish explicit goals for the quality of surface water in Texas
- Identify appropriate uses for the state's surface waters
  - Use examples: aquatic life, recreation, and public water supply
- Set criteria for evaluating support of those uses
  - Criteria examples: dissolved oxygen, pH, bacteria, etc.

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2018 TSWQS Update

- Standards revisions adopted on February 7, 2018
- Effective as a state rule as of March 1, 2018
- Sent to EPA for approval on February 27, 2018
- Provisions must be approved by EPA to be used in Clean Water Act activities like wastewater permitting, TMDL, and assessments

- Highlighted 2014 Standards: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assets/public/waterquality/standards/tswqs_2014/2014_highlighted_rule_language.pdf
- 2018 Standards: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/standards/2018-surface-water-quality-standards

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2018 TSWQS Update

- Proposed Changes for Red and Canadian Basins
  - Segment 0202A Bois D'Arc Creek: perennial ⟶ intermittent
  - Secondary Contact Recreation:
    - Dixon Creek – 0101A
    - Mud Creek – 0201A
    - Bois D'Arc Creek – 0202A
    - Choctaw Creek – 0202F
    - Smith Creek – 0202G
    - Iron Ore Creek – 0202K
    - Buffalo Creek – 0214B
    - Paradise Creek – 0230A

- Secondary Contact Recreation: Activities that commonly occur but have limited body contact and less risk of ingestion i.e. fishing, kayaking, canoeing
  - E. coli level from 126 cfu/100mL to 630 cfu/100mL

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Resources

- CRP Website: http://www.texascleanrivers.org
- Coordinated Monitoring: https://cms.lcra.org/
- Standards: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/standards
- Texas Stream Team: https://www.tceq.texas.gov/waterquality/nonpoint-source/projects/texas-stream-team
- Red River Authority: http://www.rra.texas.gov/

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Questions?

Howard Barrons
CRP Project Manager
512-239-6633
Howard.Barrons@tceq.texas.gov

Additional Contacts:
CRP@tceq.texas.gov
standards@tceq.texas.gov

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